

Many of the criticisms which we read or hear, remind us of the story of Harriet Beecher. A large number of guests were on the piazza of a hotel. Among them was a mother with a crying babe, which refused to be comforted. This was a great annoyance to the guests. Finally in a state of exasperation, Harriet Beecher inquired of the mother if she had ever read the speaker's treatise on "how to raise children." The mother replied that she had not. Then, said Harriet, "if you had you would not need to be mortified, nor these guests annoyed," to which the mother retorted, "and if you wait till you raise as many children as I have, you will then know what to write in a book under that title."

Brethren Joseph Amick and D. E. Price attended a very pleasant council-meeting at Lanark last Friday. Three members, from the Progressives, were restored to fellowship, among the number Bro. J. S. Snively, a brother of good reputation and wide influence in the community. The Brethren at Lanark have reason to feel greatly encouraged. They also speak very highly of Bro. Beahm's recent evangelistic work among them,—*Gospel Messenger*

It is gratifying to know that in the estimation of the *Gospel Messenger*, a man does not now lose his "good reputation and wide influence" by being a Progressive. Bro. Snively has been and is an intimate friend of ours. In his return to the Conservative fold we wish him and his good wife a thousand times more grace than it was possible for them to receive with us.

On the point of how long it takes to prepare a sermon, the following anecdote told of Henry Ward Beecher, may be suggestive. After he preached his wonderful sermon in Davenport, Iowa, a few years ago, he was asked by one who had watched his movements very closely, and had seen him spend only about one half hour in preparation, and that immediately preceding his delivery, how long it took him to prepare that sermon. The prompt and positive reply was, "forty years." Some people are really childish enough to think that there are ministers who can preach what they never learned. But every time they search for such a man they find he always keeps the full distance of imagination from them. Such ministers either lived before our time, or are in such a remote locality that we can never come in touch with them.

Not long ago we attended a political convention where a state organizer was present to guide the work. He said their hope laid in getting the people to subscribe for and read their papers, that there ought to be not less than 1,000 subscribers in the county. Then to clinch his argument

asked what would be thought of a man who joined a church and then continued to read literature against his religion and none in support of it. We have never been so enthused on the influences of weekly literature as since we heard this political speech. It is far better to get a man to pay for the paper than to give it to him. As a rule, people think more of what they have to pay for than what they get free. There is no disputing it—the circulation of the EVANGELIST could be doubled or trebled within one year if every reader would exert himself to that end. If we want our principles to obtain with the people we must be more diligent in disseminating our literature.

We remember well the time when we were a child, watching men swing grain cradles, and thought to ourself, "how easy it is to do that." At the age of ten the cradle was put into our hands, to give us a chance to show what we could do. How eagerly and with what triumphant expectation we swung the cradle into the grain. But, oh, our shame and disappointment, when the point of the cradle, before reaching half way across the swath, buried itself in several inches of sand and gravel! So it generally goes with a novice in the pulpit. Most of what we read and hear we know, and think therefore that it took no study to prepare to tell it from the pulpit. But we can soon dispel that delusion by trying to do the thing ourselves. We have not been a gentle critic on the preachers ourself, in the past; but every year's experience gives us more and more charity. For this reason we have found the easiest men to please with sermons are our most successful and powerful preachers. If anyone wants to be cut to pieces with craping and senseless criticism, just let him preach to a class of want-to-be can't-be's.

Bro. D. L. Miller says of their forthcoming Commentary: "The comments on the text evidence great care, much research and conscientious work in their preparation. The notes are by no means a compilation of what other commentators have said, but the author has shown originality of thought and independence in the treatment of his subjects. The work is especially free of the dogmatic spirit so common in the ordinary commentary, the best rules of interpretation have been followed, and the object has been to get at the truth contained in the Sacred Word. The realm of speculative theology has been almost entirely ignored and as a result a most excellent work has been produced. The writer has an easy, flowing style of writing, and his conclusions are so logically and clearly put that there is no escape from them. I have no hesitation in saying that it is the most valuable contribution to our church literature yet made. The author will have, when the work is com-

pleted, put about four years of almost unceasing labor on his notes, and the work in its completed state will show the character of the labor performed."

If this work be indeed a meritorious one it is sure to mark an era in Dunkardism. Literature more than councils shapes the thought and polity of a church.

A good and faithful agent of the EVANGELIST writes as follows:

"It is truly discouraging in any class where members who are blessed with this world's goods even to a surplus above present need, when asked to subscribe for the EVANGELIST will not even answer courteously. A reasonable excuse they cannot make.

Our poor members would like to take the EVANGELIST. I visited a poor sister yesterday who has taken it for a number of years but the stringency of the times has forced her to have the paper stopped. There is no way perceptible to me in which I can help you farther at present."

The Vienna correspondent of a London journal, writing about the hold that fashion has on the women of the Austrian capital, says: "It may be confidently asserted that every Vienna woman and girl dresses in a station above her lot in life. This year not a maid-servant wears a last year's jacket. It is impossible to say where the hundreds of thousands of jackets that were worn last year have gone to. On Sunday and even on week days we see even the humblest women in jackets whose sleeves stand out like the ears of some huge elephant."

The EVANGELIST has many isolated, hoary headed saints who write us of their burdens and anxieties, of their loneliness and restlessness. They have labored in the heat of the day, and have passed through many fiery trials. No doubt they will find comfort in the following lines as helping them to express their feelings:

"My feet are weary and my hands are tired,

My soul oppressed—

And I desire—what I have long desired—

Rest—only rest.

'Tis hard to toil when toil is almost vain,

In barren ways;

'Tis hard to sow and never garner grain

In harvest days.

The burden of my days is hard to bear,

But God knows best

And I have prayed, but vain has been my prayer

For rest—sweet rest.

'Tis hard to plant in spring and never reap

The autumn yield;

'Tis hard to till and when 'tis tilled to weep

O'er fruitless field.

And so I cry a weak and human cry,

So heart oppressed;

And so I sigh a weak and human sigh

For rest—for rest.

And I am restless still; 'twill soon be o'er

For down the west

Life's sun is setting, and I see the shore

Where I shall rest."